CHATEAU MONTELENA
ESTABLISHED 1882

2018 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon

Notes from the Winemaker, Matt Crafton

INTRODUCTION

At its core, wine embodies the very best of optimism. Even amidst challenging times, the fundamental belief in a better future pervades the thoughts and actions of everyone involved from kicking bare dirt to pulling the cork. It drives the development of new vineyards, spurring years of sweat and investment before yielding a single berry. It sparks the imagination of winemakers, painting the picture of possibility, justifying vigilance and detail-driven focus. Moreover, it promises a reward for patience and hope. We're regularly amazed by the stories of special bottles of Montelena, stashed away for years, destined for a single day and are incredibly happy to be part of that moment in time. It's in that same vein of optimism, in looking forward, that we continue to hone our craft, improve our corner of the planet, support our community and bring joy through each bottle we share.

VINTAGE WEATHER

A cool start to the growing season and late bloom in the vines seemed to portend a late, long growing season. But by June, the Napa Valley summer was in full swing. With a healthy crop, the vines weathered the heat, recharging each evening with cool breezes from the Pacific. Harvest was slow and steady, affording us the opportunity to be very selective in how and when the vines were picked. The result is a wide array of aromas, flavors and textures that seamlessly fuse into the character of this wine.

NOSE

Dark garnet, nearly violet in the glass, the aromatic intensity of this wine is irresistible. Fresh berries and dried cherries comingle with bergamot, lavender, mint, gunpowder and sage without a single element dominating another.

PALATE

Fresh and dynamic, with cranberry, cola and raspberry jam. The acidity is laser focused, the spine pulling the layers of flavor into harmony with the wine's supple, yet dense, structure. The tannins here serve to elevate, not overwhelm, the kinetic balance of texture, ripeness and vineyard character.

FINISH

Toasted hazelnut and vanilla emerge as the wine leans savory with mushroom, black pepper and cedar. The Merlot in the blend really shines here with rhubarb, cassis and velvety softness.

Technical Information

HARVEST DATES
September 13 – October 25

ALCOHOL
14.2%

BLEND
88% Cabernet Sauvignon
11% Merlot
1% Cabernet Franc

BARREL AGING
16 months in French and Eastern European oak, 26% new

BOTTLING DATE
April 2020

WINEMAKER
Matt Crafton

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